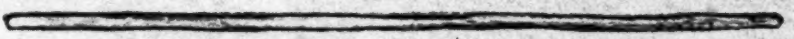
1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

372

1



412

2

352

3

415

4

5

1. Fire-sticks [⅓]. 2. Tweezers [⅓]. 3. Masai stool [⅓].
4. Honey pot [⅓]. 5. Leather bag [⅓].

[Facing P. 342]

6:Thomson K-3 (1883-1884)1887
FL12 Masai FL12

were killed, and the cattle driven off. Famine came upon them, and they were reduced to the terrible necessity of selling their children. Large numbers took refuge at Njemps and Nyiro, where they had to bow themselves to the cultivation of the soil. The war lasted several years. At last only a remnant of the Wa-kwafi of Lykipia were left, and these contrived to make peace. Not so fortunate were those of Guas' Ngishu. The Masai swept from north to south, and left not a man in the entire land, those who escaped the spear and sword finding refuge in Kavirondo.

Such is the history of the bloody feud between the Masai clans. Now they live peaceably together, with kraals in friendly proximity.

Having thus conveyed to the reader some general notions about the tribe as a whole, we may now conveniently turn to follow with the eye of our imagination the life-history of one of its members.

Very many years ago a matron of the Masai lay in what is pleasingly described as an "interesting condition." Her environment was not of a luxurious or even comfortable nature. She lay on no better a bed than a dressed bullock's hide spread on the bare ground. The hut which protected her from the blazing sun or the cold night was not built on sanitary principles, and was not commodious. It reached a maximum height of three feet and a half, and might be nine feet long by five feet broad. It was constructed of boughs bent over and interwoven together, forming a flat-roofed building with rounded corners. To keep out the wind a composition of cow's dung was liberally plastered over the boughs. This sufficed for the dry season, but for the rainy one a further covering of hides had to be laid upon it. The doorway was of the smallest, and stood at right angles to the line of the house in the manner of a porch. The hut of the expectant Masai lady was one of a circle enclosing a considerable area, in which the cattle were kept during the night. As this central space was never swept up, its condition may be better imagined than described. The smells were strikingly suggestive of the farmyard; and if the reader is so inclined, he may imagine some charming picture of full-uddered kine, with their mild eyes and expression of repose as they contentedly chew the cud. For any such picture, however, I can accept no responsibility. Outside the circle of huts there extends a strong fence of thorns as a protection from wild beasts, and in case of an attack. Inside

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

Before dealing with the subsequent procedure, after a girl has promised to visit a warrior on a given night, it is necessary to outline the sleeping arrangements and accommodation in a *manyatta* hut. The hut is not divided off into rooms in any way, and at one end of the hut is the bed upon which the woman (mother of one of the warriors) to whom the hut belongs, sleeps with her younger children. At the other end of the hut, not screened off in any way, is the bed upon which the warriors and girls sleep. No warrior may ever sleep upon the married woman's bed, but the woman's husband can come down and visit her whenever he likes, and when he does so, no warriors or girls may sleep in the hut. Ordinarily, however, the woman's husband does not live at the *manyatta*, and she and her small children sleep on her bed at the one end of the hut, while the warriors sleep on their bed at the other end of the hut with the girls. No warrior ever sleeps in his own mother's hut, but always in one of the other huts if he has invited a girl to spend the night with him. When, therefore, he has arranged for a girl to visit him at night he goes in the evening to one of the other huts and arranges to sleep on the young people's bed there. He then sends a message by the woman who owns the hut to tell the girl that he is sleeping there so that she may come to him. There is absolutely no objection to several men coming in this way to the same hut, and sleeping on the same big bed each accompanied by his girl. In fact, it is considered wrong for a warrior and a girl to have sexual intercourse unless there are also other couples sleeping on the same bed. Moreover, besides those men who have come to the hut and sent for their girls to join them there, there are usually several younger girls, daughters of the woman who owns the hut, sleeping on the bed too. These young girls, too young as yet to sleep with the men sexually, nevertheless, sleep on the same bed as the warriors and older girls, and thus grow up steeped in the customs of the *manyatta*.

It is exceptionally difficult for a European to understand all the full details and facts concerning native sex life, but the following facts have been noted and verified for the Masai. No girl may sleep with a man except she be absolutely nude, but on the other hand, although by tradition and by etiquette she may not refuse an invitation to sleep with a man (except for the two reasons already given above), she is not necessarily expected to allow him full sexual intercourse, and, in fact, often does not do so. Thus—strange as it may seem—Masai girls do sometimes go to their husbands as virgins in the physical sense of the word (*see* Marriage), although they may have slept with men in the *manyattas* countless times. Usually, however, Masai girls have no objection to full intercourse except during the first four or five days after each menstrual period (*see* Girlhood), for the Masai firmly believe that conception cannot occur unless intercourse takes place very soon after menstruation, and four to five days is considered an absolutely safe margin. Moreover, this belief seems to have a strong foundation in fact, and it thus raises a very interesting point for physiologists as to whether this is as true of primitive peoples as it

12: Fox G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

are ready for one night's occupation. Text-fig. 3 shows its ground plan. It takes two to three hours to build. If it is to be occupied for some time the walls and roof are strengthened and the hides are gradually replaced by cow-dung plastered on a backing of *Leleshwa* leaves or other suitable vegetable material. The whole, including the calf pen, is enclosed and roofed with cow-dung plaster. A small hole (*E-Luryo*) is usually made at the top of the wall above the fire-wood store to let out some of the smoke. The beds (*En-Dubosh* or *E-Rust*) are made of hides put on top of poles placed close together and raised about a foot from the ground. Text-fig. 4 shows the ground plan of a finished hut. 342 352

Grass tufts on the floor are just left to dry up and get trampled out of existence. Repairs are done by the women of the house, and consist in filling up cracks with wet cow-dung. Fleas, bugs and rats are uncommon in Masai huts. Dried puff-balls and dry cow-dung are sometimes burnt as an insectifuge. The young people are not infested with body lice; but these abound on the aged, taking refuge in bead necklaces and other ornaments. 342 [356] [151] 515

When the people move on the village is usually left to fall into ruins, but it may be reoccupied later if desired, and if it has not yet fallen beyond repair. 361

[P. 466 is blank]

Warriors do their hair in pigtails, *el-taika*; other people of both sexes shave their heads periodically. In both sexes the ear-lobes are pierced and elongated, and the two lower middle incisor teeth are removed. Cicatrised patterns are often made on the upper part of the body in both sexes.

Iron-work

Iron is used for weapons (spear and sword of warriors, and arrows of elders), axes, knife-blades, razors, and many of the ornaments of both sexes. The spears and swords are distinctive of Masai culture and, together with the shield and *e-rrap* arm-clamp, separate the Masai and Nandi culturally from other Nilo-Hamites. Spears are of three shapes: a small leaf-shaped blade with long neck, long shaft, and medium butt; the great "shovel-blade" with short neck, long shaft, and medium butt; and the long-bladed winged spear with short shaft and long butt. The colour of the short shaft of the winged war-spear is important: senior warriors have black shafts, others reddish ones, and the demand of junior warriors for the privilege of black shafts is a significant factor in the tension that arises between senior and junior warriors. The sword has a long narrow blade and is kept in a red leather sheath attached to the belt. The winged spear-blade and sword have been borrowed by the Nandi, Kipsikis, Keyo, Kony and others of the Nandi division, together with the arm-clamp; the Kikuyu have imitated them.

Other Objects

Clubs are made of wood or rhinoceros horn. Shields are roughly oval, about 3 ft. long, and made of buffalo or giraffe hide on a light wooden framework; according to Merker, the old form of shield was circular and (if the scale of his Fig. 34*b* is correct) about 1 ft. in diameter. Stools are cut out of a solid block of wood and have three legs. Horns are used for summoning people, but there are no musical instruments or drums.

Ritual and Beliefs

Religion

Little has been recorded of Masai religious beliefs, except such obvious facts as the invocation of *Enk-ai* (the Masai word for God, rain, and sky). As to ancestor-worship, it is generally said that the Masai do not believe in an after-life (said also of the Suk); but the alleged belief that the soul of a baloon or rich man turns into a snake implies some belief in the survival of the soul. This matter needs careful investigation; and Merker's statement that each Masai is taken to paradise by his guardian angel and let in by *Enk-ai* if he has been good is alien to Nilo-Hamitic thought. *Enk-ai* is recognised as a creator, and is prayed to by both men and women. Some of the prayers recorded include an invocation to both *Enk-ai* and Mbatiany, the baloon who died *c.* 1890; thus Thomson heard the Il-Aikipiak praying to *Enk-ai* and Mbatiany, and the Nandi war dance after a victory, recorded by Hollis after Mbatiany's death, contained also an invocation to *Enk-ai* and Mbatiany. The "minor deity called Nelterkob" which Thomson thought was an earth-spirit, appears in Krapf's book as the Nelterukob, "the mediator between God and men." But the Masai word *nalterukop* means no more than "that which began the earth," and thus would seem really to apply to *Enk-ai* in his rôle as creator. *Enk-ai*, god, is grammatically feminine, and his wife *Ol-apa*, the moon, is grammatically masculine.

Death and Burial

The bodies of most people are put out for the hyenas, to the west of the kraal, and laid on the left side so that the face looks eastward, with the legs drawn up, the head supported by the left hand, and the right hand across the breast. The

[561] [535] [387] [574] [369] worry of old: 'I am the son of So-and-So,' and 'I am the Son of Such-and-Such' and drive their bounding oxen into the outcrop. They fill their gourds with it and then return home and are treated with great reverence at Masai villages en route, being fed on a hot mixture of milk and water, known as 'blue water.'

Once painted, the young men formed into two columns, some 30 yards apart, and marched to the village. Many were ostrich headdresses and some the lion-mane caps. Around their necks and waists they wore gaily coloured lengths of calico and beaded thongs secured crescent-shaped bells to their thighs. The clashing of the bells was deafening. This return journey to the village is carefully planned so that the young men do not have to walk through or near any water or cross a stream. On nearing the village, the columns counter-marched, then joined together into double file and entered the arena. As they passed, their mothers called out: 'Bidapuk!'—'May you survive!'—but many of the women were busy attending to those drowning fits. There were a number of very violent ones as soon as the columns had passed within the circle of houses. Then the columns split up into groups and marched back and forth across the arena, each group led by an elder blowing a kudu horn (one of the very few Masai musical instruments). Now and then two groups would halt and, forming line, kneel and bow to one another; or to the O-Singira hut.

[534]

[561] [302] [413] Late in the afternoon of this day the mothers of the 40 'years ones' shave their sons' heads. All the hair, eyebrows included, is removed by means of a spendour Masai razor. Milk is used in place of soap. Whilst being shaved, each young man squats in front of his hut on the ceremonial hide on which, as a boy, he had sat to be circumcised, and which, in future, will form the top layer of his mother's bed. A little of the hair from the Ol-Oiboni and his lieutenant is also put in their mothers' beds, the remainder being thrown into the calf pens which form a part of their family homes. Great care is taken that none is left lying about in the open in case birds should use it for their nests—a grave offence to the young men's sacred role.

[826] [554] During the course of the day the branches used as night barricades between the houses were replaced with new ones bearing green leaves. This is a symbolic act, meant to ensure that the manes may flourish as 'green hay trees.'

[989] The third day is called 'The Day of the Sacred Hut.' During the morning a heifer, a gift to the Ol-Oiboni from his father, is driven into the kraal and slaughtered. This animal, called 'The Cow of the Rings,' must be a first-calver, well built, and black with a white belly. All the moran gathered at the slaughtering place to receive their rings from 'The Cutter-up of the Hide,' whilst their families waited in the village in an atmosphere of great expectancy.

Late in the afternoon the first of the moran, naked and still whitened with chalk-mix, came running back to his hut. There he received a deafening welcome from his family, whom he then led in a boisterous procession round and round the sacred hut. Soon, the whole arena was full of moran leading their families round the O-Singira, everyone shouting and highly excited. Each young man wore, on the third finger of his left hand, a ring from the hide of the Ol-Oiboni's heifer. These rings are really only strips of hide about four inches long with a hole near one end to take the wearer's finger. After a time, the 'years' ate arrived, their shaven heads glistening, white circles of chalk-mix like spectacles round their eyes and garlands of green leaves round their necks. They stood in a group near the O-Singira whilst the Ol-Oiboni was led to his hut. In front of his doorway was placed the hide on which he had sat to be shaved, and on this was set his three-legged stool, and into its concave seat was poured a mixture of water, milk and honey. The Ol-Oiboni, who wanted all his conscious of his role of scapegoat, does not on the stool.

[359]

/15 cont./

342 (354) [313] the nearby hearth (eŋ gema), which is formed by three stones lying beside one another in a clover-leaf shape. Good firewood is scarce on the steppe: one must therefore use the smoky brushwood. At the opposite end of the hut is the sleeping place for the woman (e rnat nɨ̃nɔ̃ = small bed) and beside it that for the man (e rnat kɨnɔk = big bed). A latticework of poles and switches, which is covered with grass and cattle dung, like the hut walls, close the two off from each other and from the rest of the space in the hut. From the

342 516 291

Ill. 6. Masai hut.
The carbine standing by the hut belongs to a soldier of the Protectorate Troops.)

342 [352] [237] [233] latter a separate entrance leads into each of these compartments. The bed consists of a pad of dried grass over which two dehaired goat-skins are spread. Opposite the door is found a small enclosure (ol ale l el aeibe) into which young calves are put for the night. There is often found beside the door yet another enclosure (ol ale l ol bolelon) for young goats and sheep, if these are not housed in small pens built beside or on the hut.

/38 cont./

415

[239] and 20-25 centimeters thick, one ties a piece of fresh meat-skin. then removes the one, after it has dried and becomes hard, as a

• 352
412

415
[239] cover and /38/ ties it with a thong (rig gim, ng gmin) to the finished container. Smaller and larger pouches (ri ldan, ri ldmar) of meat's leather serve for storing mild foods. In every hut one also finds round, four-legged wooden stools 2-3 feet high (Fig.
352

/10 cont./
352 (DZZ) 412 (of ships) of originally on which people sit to eat. The stool is made out of one piece. In that one first roughly hews the block with an ax and then carves it with the knife. A few cooking spoons (of other) 'a other) (1).

(412)

1. Parsed from the Delaegga /Chegga/ word ellagi the Ideni do not have a word of their own, since they were unfamiliar with spoons in former times.

mixing sticks for thick porridge (of gutes, of gutesi) whisks (Fig. 13), 1 ax (Fig. 14) (ax side) 'a dolo) and a couple of knives (Fig. 15) (of Ideni) complete the kitchen equipment. Nowadays

342 241 412 301

Ill. 14. Woman with pack basket.

412 (291) spoons (formerly only the sticks and whisks) are also carved out of wood by older people. The whisk has various shapes: sometimes it consists of a stick on whose lower end is stuck a vertebra from a

375 and so on. The wife is given a specified number of cattle to keep in trust for her son, and she and the children also tend young animals in the herds.

382. These huts are about five feet high and of varying dimensions, but usually roughly square and 10 to 20 feet across. The door is very low. Just inside the door there is normally a baffle wall of loosely woven twigs. Beyond that there are often two or three rooms, each divided from the others by a low open wall of twigs. Young livestock are brought into one of the rooms and the others serve for sleeping and cooking. Usually the beds are platforms of twigs and grass covered by hides. The cooking fire is in a far corner and is very small, normally with three stones around it to support pots. There is no smoke hole in the roof. The outer walls and roof are an open mesh of wattle often interwoven with coarse grass and shrubs. Support comes from larger branches and small logs up to about six inches in diameter. The exterior and walls and roof, and the insides of the door opening are plastered with a mixture of mud, cattle dung, and short grasses. But design varies slightly from area to area. Constructing the huts is women's work. Men occasionally help in collecting larger trees and bushes.

5: Abbott N-5 (ca. 1890) 1892 FN4 Chagga FN4
Masai FL12

ARCHITECTURAL OBJECTS AND FURNITURE.

C 342

NATIVE HUT (Numba). Model much too small, and door proportionately too high. (See figs. 6, 7, and 8.)

Wa Chaga tribe; Moshi District, Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151258

NATIVE HUT. Model made by Chaga boy. Usual dimensions 10 to 11 feet high and 12 to 15 feet diameter.

Height, 4 inches.

Wa Chaga tribe; Moshi district, Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151259

WICKER-DOOR (Mlile). Model. The door in native huts slides between two upright sticks and the door jamb.

Wa Chaga tribe; Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151797

C 352 D85

WOODEN STOOL with four legs. Cut out of a log of wood, and smeared with red ocher.

Height, 8½ inches; depth, 7½ inches.

Wa Chaga tribe; Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151256

WOODEN STOOL with three legs. Painted with red ocher.

Height, 7 inches.

Wa Chaga tribe; Moshi district, Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151798

M 352 ● 513 285

MAT. Made of skin. Placed on the ground for sleeping during a journey. Other tribes carry mats of bulrushes. Bought of Masai war party, probably from N'Jiri, met with on the Tsavo River.

Width, 32 inches.

Masai tribe; Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151288

C 251 417

FOOD-HOOK (Kiwili). Natural forked branch, peeled. Hung in huts for the suspension of articles to protect them against vermin.

Length, 14½ inches.

Wa Chaga tribe; Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151799

C 343

GRANARY (Kikombi). Model of a conical thatched hut woven of reeds. Entrance under the eaves. The usual size is about 8 feet high, 4½ feet in diameter. Model made by a Wa Chaga boy. These huts are set up on four stones.

Wa Chaga tribe; Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151794

GRANARY (Kikombi). Model, differing from the other granary by being placed on supports.

Wa Chaga tribe; Mount Kilima-Njaro, East Africa. 151795